

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image formation apparatus having a print head with an ink discharge face where ink discharge orifices are provided, whereby ink is discharged from said ink discharge orifices so as to form an image on a recording medium, said image formation apparatus comprising:

a cleaning member cylindrically formed of a material having elasticity;

moving means for moving both the peripheral face of said cleaning member and the ink discharge face of said print head relative one to another, with both in contact one with another; and

driving control means for controlling the driving of said moving means;

wherein, each time a predetermined number of sheets of said recording medium have images formed thereupon following starting of the operations for forming images, the image formation operations are temporarily interrupted, and said moving means are driven under the control of said driving control means, and the peripheral face of said cleaning member is moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith, thereby suctioning the ink within said ink discharge orifices.

2. An image formation apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that the peripheral face of said cleaning member is relatively moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith in conjunction with the opening action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

3. An image formation apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that the peripheral face of said cleaning member is relatively moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith in conjunction with the closing action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

4. An image formation apparatus having a print head

with an ink discharge face where ink discharge orifices are provided, whereby ink is discharged from said ink discharge orifices so as to form an image on a recording medium, said image formation apparatus comprising:

a cleaning member cylindrically formed of a material having elasticity;

moving means for moving both the peripheral face of said cleaning member and the ink discharge face of said print head relative one to another, with both in contact one with another;

driving control means for controlling the driving of said moving means; and

discharge control means for controlling discharge operations of ink from ink discharge orifices on said ink discharge face;

wherein, each time a predetermined number of sheets of said recording medium have images formed thereupon following starting of the operations for forming images, the image formation operations are temporarily interrupted, and said moving means are driven under the control of said driving control means, and the peripheral face of said cleaning member is moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith, thereby suctioning the ink within said ink discharge orifices, and further wherein, following said cleaning member moving over said ink

discharge face, under control of said discharge control means, preliminary discharge of ink from said ink discharge orifices is performed.

5. An image formation apparatus according to Claim 4, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that the peripheral face of said cleaning member is relatively moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith in conjunction with the opening action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

6. An image formation apparatus according to Claim 4, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that the peripheral face of said cleaning member is relatively moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith in conjunction with the closing action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily

closed and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

7. An image formation apparatus having a print head with an ink discharge face where ink discharge orifices are provided, whereby ink is discharged from said ink discharge orifices so as to form an image on a recording medium, said image formation apparatus comprising:

a cleaning member cylindrically formed of a material having elasticity;

moving means for moving both the peripheral face of said cleaning member and the ink discharge face of said print head relative one to another, with both in contact one with another;

driving control means for controlling the driving of said moving means; and

discharge control means for controlling discharge operations of ink from ink discharge orifices on said ink discharge face;

wherein, each time a predetermined number of sheets of said recording medium have images formed thereupon following starting of the operations for forming images, the image formation operations are temporarily interrupted, and discharge operations of ink from ink discharge orifices are performed under control of said discharge control means,

whereby preliminary discharge of ink from said ink discharge orifices is performed.

8. An image formation apparatus according to Claim 7, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that said cleaning member and said print head are relatively moved in conjunction with the opening action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

9. An image formation apparatus according to Claim 7, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that of said cleaning member and said print head are relatively moved in conjunction with the closing action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

10. An image formation apparatus having a print head with an ink discharge face where rows of ink discharge orifices for each of a plurality of colors are provided, whereby ink is discharged from said ink discharge orifices so as to form an image on a recording medium, said image formation apparatus comprising:

a cleaning member cylindrically formed of a material having elasticity;

a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head;

cap opening/closing means for opening and closing said cap member, so that the peripheral face of said cleaning member and the ink discharge face of said print head are moved relative one to another in a direction orthogonal to the rows of ink discharge orifices for each color, with both in contact one with another, in conjunction with the opening action of said cap member;

driving control means for controlling the driving of said cap opening/closing means; and

discharge control means for controlling discharge operations of ink from ink discharge orifices on said ink discharge face;

wherein, each time a predetermined number of sheets of said recording medium have images formed thereupon following

starting of the operations for forming images, the image formation operations are temporarily interrupted, and said cap opening/closing means are driven under the control of said driving control means to temporarily close said cap member and then reopen, and the peripheral face of said cleaning member is moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith, thereby suctioning the ink within said ink discharge orifices, and further wherein, following said cleaning member moving over said ink discharge face, under control of said discharge control means, preliminary discharge of ink from said ink discharge orifices is performed in the order of the rows of ink discharge orifices of each color on said ink discharge face which said cleaning member has passed over.

11. An image formation apparatus having a print head with an ink discharge face where rows of ink discharge orifices for each of a plurality of colors are provided, whereby ink is discharged from said ink discharge orifices so as to form an image on a recording medium, said image formation apparatus comprising:

a cleaning member cylindrically formed of a material having elasticity;

a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print



head;

cap opening/closing means for opening and closing said cap member, so that the peripheral face of said cleaning member and the ink discharge face of said print head are moved relative one to another in a direction orthogonal to the rows of ink discharge orifices for each color, with both in contact one with another, in conjunction with the closing action of said cap member;

driving control means for controlling the driving of said cap opening/closing means; and

discharge control means for controlling discharge operations of ink from ink discharge orifices on said ink discharge face;

wherein, each time a predetermined number of sheets of said recording medium have images formed thereupon following starting of the operations for forming images, the image formation operations are temporarily interrupted, and said cap opening/closing means are driven under the control of said driving control means to temporarily close said cap member and then reopen, and the peripheral face of said cleaning member is moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith, thereby suctioning the ink within said ink discharge orifices, and further wherein, following said cleaning member moving over said ink discharge face, under control of said discharge

control means, preliminary discharge of ink from said ink discharge orifices is performed in the order of the rows of ink discharge orifices of each color on said ink discharge face which said cleaning member has passed over.

12. An image formation apparatus having a print head with an ink discharge face where ink discharge orifices are provided, whereby ink is discharged from said ink discharge orifices so as to form an image on a recording medium, said image formation apparatus comprising:

a cleaning member cylindrically formed of a material having elasticity;

moving means for moving both the peripheral face of said cleaning member and the ink discharge face of said print head relative one to another, with both in contact one with another; and

driving control means for controlling the driving of said moving means;

wherein, each time a predetermined amount of time elapses following starting of the operations for forming images on said recording medium, the image formation operations are temporarily interrupted, and said moving means are driven under the control of said driving control means, and the peripheral face of said cleaning member is moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in

contact therewith, thereby suctioning the ink within said ink discharge orifices.

13. An image formation apparatus according to Claim 12, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that the peripheral face of said cleaning member is relatively moved over the surface of said ink discharge face of said print head while in contact therewith in conjunction with the opening action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

14. An image formation apparatus according to Claim 12, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that the peripheral face of said cleaning member is relatively moved over the surface of said ink discharge face of said print head while in contact therewith in conjunction with the closing action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then opened again during

interruption of said image formation operations.

15. An image formation apparatus having a print head with an ink discharge face where ink discharge orifices are provided, whereby ink is discharged from said ink discharge orifices so as to form an image on a recording medium, said image formation apparatus comprising:

a cleaning member cylindrically formed of a material having elasticity;

moving means for moving both the peripheral face of said cleaning member and the ink discharge face of said print head relative one to another, with both in contact one with another;

driving control means for controlling the driving of said moving means; and

discharge control means for controlling discharge operations of ink from ink discharge orifices on said ink discharge face;

wherein, each time a predetermined amount of time elapses following starting of the operations for forming images on said recording medium, the image formation operations are temporarily interrupted, and said moving means are driven under the control of said driving control means, and the peripheral face of said cleaning member is moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in

contact therewith, thereby suctioning the ink within said ink discharge orifices, and further wherein, following said cleaning member moving over said ink discharge face, under control of said discharge control means, preliminary discharge of ink from said ink discharge orifices is performed.

16. An image formation apparatus according to Claim 15, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that the peripheral face of said cleaning member is relatively moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith in conjunction with the opening action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

17. An image formation apparatus according to Claim 15, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that the peripheral face of said cleaning member is relatively

moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith in conjunction with the closing action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

18. An image formation apparatus having a print head with an ink discharge face where ink discharge orifices are provided, whereby ink is discharged from said ink discharge orifices so as to form an image on a recording medium, said image formation apparatus comprising:

a cleaning member cylindrically formed of a material having elasticity;

moving means for moving both the peripheral face of said cleaning member and the ink discharge face of said print head relative one to another, with both in contact one with another;

driving control means for controlling the driving of said moving means; and

discharge control means for controlling discharge operations of ink from ink discharge orifices on said ink discharge face;

wherein, each time a predetermined amount of time elapses following starting of the operations for forming images on said recording medium, the image formation

operations are temporarily interrupted, and discharge operations of ink from ink discharge orifices are performed under control of said discharge control means, whereby preliminary discharge of ink from said ink discharge orifices is performed.

19. An image formation apparatus according to Claim 18, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that said cleaning member and said print head are relatively moved in conjunction with the opening action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations..

20. An image formation apparatus according to Claim 18, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that said cleaning member and said print head are relatively moved in conjunction with the closing action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed

and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

21. An image formation apparatus having a print head with an ink discharge face where rows of ink discharge orifices for each of a plurality of colors are provided, whereby ink is discharged from said ink discharge orifices so as to form an image on a recording medium, said image formation apparatus comprising:

a cleaning member cylindrically formed of a material having elasticity;

a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head;

cap opening/closing means for opening and closing said cap member, so that the peripheral face of said cleaning member and the ink discharge face of said print head are moved relative one to another in a direction orthogonal to the rows of ink discharge orifices for each color, with both in contact one with another, in conjunction with the opening action of said cap member;

driving control means for controlling the driving of said cap opening/closing means; and

discharge control means for controlling discharge operations of ink from ink discharge orifices on said ink



discharge face;

wherein, each time a predetermined amount of time elapses following starting of the operations for forming images, the image formation operations are temporarily interrupted, and said cap opening/closing means are driven under the control of said driving control means to temporarily close said cap member and then reopen, and the peripheral face of said cleaning member is moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith, thereby suctioning the ink within said ink discharge orifices, and further wherein, following said cleaning member moving over said ink discharge face, under control of said discharge control means, preliminary discharge of ink from said ink discharge orifices is performed in the order of the rows of ink discharge orifices of each color on said ink discharge face which said cleaning member has passed over.

22. An image formation apparatus having a print head with an ink discharge face where rows of ink discharge orifices for each of a plurality of colors are provided, whereby ink is discharged from said ink discharge orifices so as to form an image on a recording medium, said image formation apparatus comprising:

a cleaning member cylindrically formed of a material

having elasticity;

a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head;

cap opening/closing means for opening and closing said cap member, so that the peripheral face of said cleaning member and the ink discharge face of said print head are moved relative one to another in a direction orthogonal to the rows of ink discharge orifices for each color, with both in contact one with another, in conjunction with the closing action of said cap member;

driving control means for controlling the driving of said cap opening/closing means; and

discharge control means for controlling discharge operations of ink from ink discharge orifices on said ink discharge face;

wherein, each time a predetermined amount of time elapses following starting of the operations for forming images on said recording medium, the image formation operations are temporarily interrupted, and said cap opening/closing means are driven under the control of said driving control means to temporarily close said cap member and then reopen, and the peripheral face of said cleaning member is moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith, thereby suctioning the ink

within said ink discharge orifices, and further wherein, following said cleaning member moving over said ink discharge face, under control of said discharge control means, preliminary discharge of ink from said ink discharge orifices is performed in the order of the rows of ink discharge orifices of each color on said ink discharge face which said cleaning member has passed over.

23. An image formation apparatus according to any of Claims 1 through 22, wherein said cap member is closed following said image formation operations.

24. An image formation apparatus according to any of Claims 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, and 22, wherein an ink receptacle, for receiving ink discharged from said ink discharge orifices by preliminary discharging, is provided on the inner side of said cap member.

25. A control method for an image formation apparatus comprising

a print head having an ink discharge face where ink discharge orifices are provided,

a cleaning member cylindrically formed of a material having elasticity,

moving means for moving both the peripheral face of

said cleaning member and the ink discharge face of said print head relative one to another, with both in contact one with another, and

driving control means for controlling the driving of said moving means,

whereby ink is discharged from said ink discharge orifices so as to form an image on a recording medium,

wherein, each time a predetermined number of sheets of said recording medium have images formed thereupon following starting of the operations for forming images, the image formation operations are temporarily interrupted, and said moving means are driven under the control of said driving control means, and the peripheral face of said cleaning member is moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith, thereby suctioning the ink within said ink discharge orifices.

26. A control method for an image formation apparatus according to Claim 25, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that the peripheral face of said cleaning member is relatively moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith in conjunction

with the opening action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

27. A control method for an image formation apparatus according to Claim 25, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that the peripheral face of said cleaning member is relatively moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith in conjunction with the closing action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

28. A control method for an image formation apparatus comprising

a print head having an ink discharge face where ink discharge orifices are provided,

a cleaning member cylindrically formed of a material having elasticity,

moving means for moving both the peripheral face of said cleaning member and the ink discharge face of said print head relative one to another, with both in contact one

with another,

driving control means for controlling the driving of said moving means, and

discharge control means for controlling discharge operations of ink from ink discharge orifices on said ink discharge face,

whereby ink is discharged from said ink discharge orifices so as to form an image on a recording medium,

wherein, each time a predetermined number of sheets of said recording medium have images formed thereupon following starting of the operations for forming images, the image formation operations are temporarily interrupted, and said moving means are driven under the control of said driving control means, and the peripheral face of said cleaning member is moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith, thereby suctioning the ink within said ink discharge orifices, and further wherein, following said cleaning member moving over said ink discharge face, under control of said discharge control means, preliminary discharge of ink from said ink discharge orifices is performed.

29. A control method for an image formation apparatus according to Claim 28, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting

said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that the peripheral face of said cleaning member is relatively moved over the surface of said ink discharge face of said print head while in contact therewith in conjunction with the opening action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

30. A control method for an image formation apparatus according to Claim 28, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that the peripheral face of said cleaning member is relatively moved over the surface of said ink discharge face of said print head while in contact therewith in conjunction with the closing action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

31. A control method for an image formation apparatus comprising

a print head having an ink discharge face where ink discharge orifices are provided,

a cleaning member cylindrically formed of a material having elasticity,

moving means for moving both the peripheral face of said cleaning member and the ink discharge face of said print head relative one to another, with both in contact one with another,

driving control means for controlling the driving of said moving means, and

discharge control means for controlling discharge operations of ink from ink discharge orifices on said ink discharge face,

whereby ink is discharged from said ink discharge orifices so as to form an image on a recording medium,

wherein, each time a predetermined number of sheets of said recording medium have images formed thereupon following starting of the operations for forming images, the image formation operations are temporarily interrupted, and said discharge operations of ink from ink discharge orifices are performed under control of said discharge control means, whereby control is effected such that preliminary discharge of ink from said ink discharge orifices is performed.

32. A control method for an image formation apparatus



according to Claim 31, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that said cleaning member and said print head are relatively moved in conjunction with the opening action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

33. A control method for an image formation apparatus according to Claim 31, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that said cleaning member and said print head are relatively moved in conjunction with the closing action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

34. A control method for an image formation apparatus comprising

a print head with an ink discharge face where rows of ink discharge orifices for each of a plurality of colors

are provided,

a cleaning member cylindrically formed of a material having elasticity,

a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head,

cap opening/closing means for opening and closing said cap member, so that the peripheral face of said cleaning member and the ink discharge face of said print head are moved relative one to another in a direction orthogonal to the rows of ink discharge orifices for each color, with both in contact one with another, in conjunction with the opening action of said cap member,

driving control means for controlling the driving of said cap opening/closing means, and

discharge control means for controlling discharge operations of ink from ink discharge orifices on said ink discharge face,

whereby ink is discharged from said ink discharge orifices so as to form an image on a recording medium,

wherein, each time a predetermined number of sheets of said recording medium have images formed thereupon following starting of the operations for forming images, the image formation operations are temporarily interrupted, and said cap opening/closing means are driven under the control of

said driving control means to temporarily close said cap member and then reopen, and the peripheral face of said cleaning member is moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith, thereby suctioning the ink within said ink discharge orifices, and further wherein, following said cleaning member moving over said ink discharge face, under control of said discharge control means, preliminary discharge of ink from said ink discharge orifices is performed in the order of the rows of ink discharge orifices of each color on said ink discharge face which said cleaning member has passed over.

35. A control method for an image formation apparatus comprising

a print head with an ink discharge face where rows of ink discharge orifices for each of a plurality of colors are provided,

a cleaning member cylindrically formed of a material having elasticity,

a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head,

cap opening/closing means for opening and closing said cap member, so that the peripheral face of said cleaning member and the ink discharge face of said print

head are moved relative one to another in a direction orthogonal to the rows of ink discharge orifices for each color, with both in contact one with another, in conjunction with the closing action of said cap member,

driving control means for controlling the driving of said cap opening/closing means, and

discharge control means for controlling discharge operations of ink from ink discharge orifices on said ink discharge face,

whereby ink is discharged from said ink discharge orifices so as to form an image on a recording medium,

wherein, each time a predetermined number of sheets of said recording medium have images formed thereupon following starting of the operations for forming images, the image formation operations are temporarily interrupted, and said cap opening/closing means are driven under the control of said driving control means to temporarily close said cap member and then reopen, and the peripheral face of said cleaning member is moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith, thereby suctioning the ink within said ink discharge orifices, and further wherein, following said cleaning member moving over said ink discharge face, under control of said discharge control means, preliminary discharge of ink from said ink discharge orifices is performed in the order of the rows of

ink discharge orifices of each color on said ink discharge face which said cleaning member has passed over.

36. A control method for an image formation apparatus comprising

a print head having an ink discharge face where ink discharge orifices are provided,

a cleaning member cylindrically formed of a material having elasticity,

moving means for moving both the peripheral face of said cleaning member and the ink discharge face of said print head relative one to another, with both in contact one with another, and

driving control means for controlling the driving of said moving means,

whereby ink is discharged from said ink discharge orifices so as to form an image on a recording medium,

wherein, each time a predetermined amount of time elapses following starting of the operations for forming images on said recording medium, the image formation operations are temporarily interrupted, and said moving means are driven under the control of said driving control means, and the peripheral face of said cleaning member is moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith, thereby suctioning the ink within said

ink discharge orifices.

37. A control method for an image formation apparatus according to Claim 36, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that the peripheral face of said cleaning member is relatively moved over the surface of said ink discharge face of said print head while in contact therewith in conjunction with the opening action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

38. A control method for an image formation apparatus according to Claim 36, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that the peripheral face of said cleaning member is relatively moved over the surface of said ink discharge face of said print head while in contact therewith in conjunction with the closing action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then

opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

39. A control method for an image formation apparatus comprising

a print head with an ink discharge face where ink discharge orifices are provided,

a cleaning member cylindrically formed of a material having elasticity,

moving means for moving both the peripheral face of said cleaning member and the ink discharge face of said print head relative one to another, with both in contact one with another,

driving control means for controlling the driving of said moving means, and

discharge control means for controlling discharge operations of ink from ink discharge orifices on said ink discharge face,

whereby ink is discharged from said ink discharge orifices so as to form an image on a recording medium;

wherein, each time a predetermined amount of time elapses following starting of the operations for forming images on said recording medium, the image formation operations are temporarily interrupted, and said moving means are driven under the control of said driving control

means, and the peripheral face of said cleaning member is moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith, thereby suctioning the ink within said ink discharge orifices, and further wherein, following said cleaning member moving over said ink discharge face, under control of said discharge control means, preliminary discharge of ink from said ink discharge orifices is performed.

40. A control method for an image formation apparatus according to Claim 39, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that the peripheral face of said cleaning member is relatively moved over the surface of said ink discharge face of said print head while in contact therewith in conjunction with the opening action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

41. A control method for an image formation apparatus according to Claim 39, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting



said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that the peripheral face of said cleaning member is relatively moved over the surface of said ink discharge face of said print head while in contact therewith in conjunction with the closing action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

42. A control method for an image formation apparatus comprising

a print head with an ink discharge face where ink discharge orifices are provided,

a cleaning member cylindrically formed of a material having elasticity,

moving means for moving both the peripheral face of said cleaning member and the ink discharge face of said print head relative one to another, with both in contact one with another,

driving control means for controlling the driving of said moving means, and

discharge control means for controlling discharge operations of ink from ink discharge orifices on said ink discharge face,

whereby ink is discharged from said ink discharge orifices so as to form an image on a recording medium;

wherein, each time a predetermined amount of time elapses following starting of the operations for forming images on said recording medium, the image formation operations are temporarily interrupted, and discharge operations of ink from ink discharge orifices are performed under control of said discharge control means, whereby preliminary discharge of ink from said ink discharge orifices is performed.

43. A control method for an image formation apparatus according to Claim 42, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that said cleaning member and said print head are relatively moved in conjunction with the opening action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

44. A control method for an image formation apparatus according to Claim 42, further comprising a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting

said ink discharge face of said print head, wherein opening and closing of said cap member is performed by driving said moving means such that said cleaning member and said print head are relatively moved in conjunction with the closing action of said cap member, and wherein said cap member is temporarily closed and then opened again during interruption of said image formation operations.

45. A control method for an image formation apparatus comprising

a print head with an ink discharge face where rows of ink discharge orifices for each of a plurality of colors are provided,

a cleaning member cylindrically formed of a material having elasticity,

a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head,

cap opening/closing means for opening and closing said cap member, so that the peripheral face of said cleaning member and the ink discharge face of said print head are moved relative one to another in a direction orthogonal to the rows of ink discharge orifices for each color, with both in contact one with another, in conjunction with the opening action of said cap member,

driving control means for controlling the driving of said cap opening/closing means, and

discharge control means for controlling discharge operations of ink from ink discharge orifices on said ink discharge face,

whereby ink is discharged from said ink discharge orifices so as to form an image on a recording medium;

wherein, each time a predetermined amount of time elapses following starting of the operations for forming images, the image formation operations are temporarily interrupted, and said cap opening/closing means are driven under the control of said driving control means to temporarily close said cap member and then reopen, and the peripheral face of said cleaning member is moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith, thereby suctioning the ink within said ink discharge orifices, and further wherein, following said cleaning member moving over said ink discharge face, under control of said discharge control means, preliminary discharge of ink from said ink discharge orifices is performed in the order of the rows of ink discharge orifices of each color on said ink discharge face which said cleaning member has passed over.

46. A control method for an image formation apparatus

comprising

a print head with an ink discharge face where rows of ink discharge orifices for each of a plurality of colors are provided,

a cleaning member cylindrically formed of a material having elasticity,

a cap member for storing said cleaning member therein and also protecting said ink discharge face of said print head,

cap opening/closing means for opening and closing said cap member, so that the peripheral face of said cleaning member and the ink discharge face of said print head are moved relative one to another in a direction orthogonal to the rows of ink discharge orifices for each color, with both in contact one with another, in conjunction with the closing action of said cap member,

driving control means for controlling the driving of said cap opening/closing means, and

discharge control means for controlling discharge operations of ink from ink discharge orifices on said ink discharge face,

whereby ink is discharged from said ink discharge orifices so as to form an image on a recording medium;

wherein, each time a predetermined amount of time elapses following starting of the operations for forming

images on said recording medium, the image formation operations are temporarily interrupted, and said cap opening/closing means are driven under the control of said driving control means to temporarily close said cap member and then reopen, and the peripheral face of said cleaning member is moved over the surface of said ink discharge face while in contact therewith, thereby suctioning the ink within said ink discharge orifices, and further wherein, following said cleaning member moving over said ink discharge face, under control of said discharge control means, preliminary discharge of ink from said ink discharge orifices is performed in the order of the rows of ink discharge orifices of each color on said ink discharge face which said cleaning member has passed over.

47. A control method for an image formation apparatus according to any of Claims 25 through 46, wherein said cap member is closed following said image formation operations.